

ALL IN COLOUR - MAKES LEARNING A JOY

# Once Upon a Time

EVERY WEDNESDAY

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# Thumbelina



1. Once there was a woman whose dearest wish was to have a child of her own. At last, she decided to go and ask the advice of an old witch who lived in a wood, some distance away. The witch heard the woman's request and gave her a barleycorn. "Go home and plant this in a pot," she said. "Look after it well."



2. The woman was puzzled by this advice, but she carried the barleycorn home carefully and planted it in a pot. Then she stood the pot in the window, where it would get plenty of light and warmth. After a time, a lovely tulip grew and when the petals opened, there, inside, was a beautiful little girl.



3. Because the child was no bigger than the woman's thumb, she was called Thumbelina. The woman was delighted and made Thumbelina a little bed out of a walnut-shell. In the day-time, she played on the table, under the woman's watchful eye, but one night, an ugly old toad hopped in through the window.



4. The toad picked up the walnut-shell, with the sleeping Thumbelina still inside and hopped out of the window with it and away down the garden. "What a pretty little girl," she said to herself. "She would make a fine bride for my son." The toad's son, who was even uglier than his mother, croaked with delight.

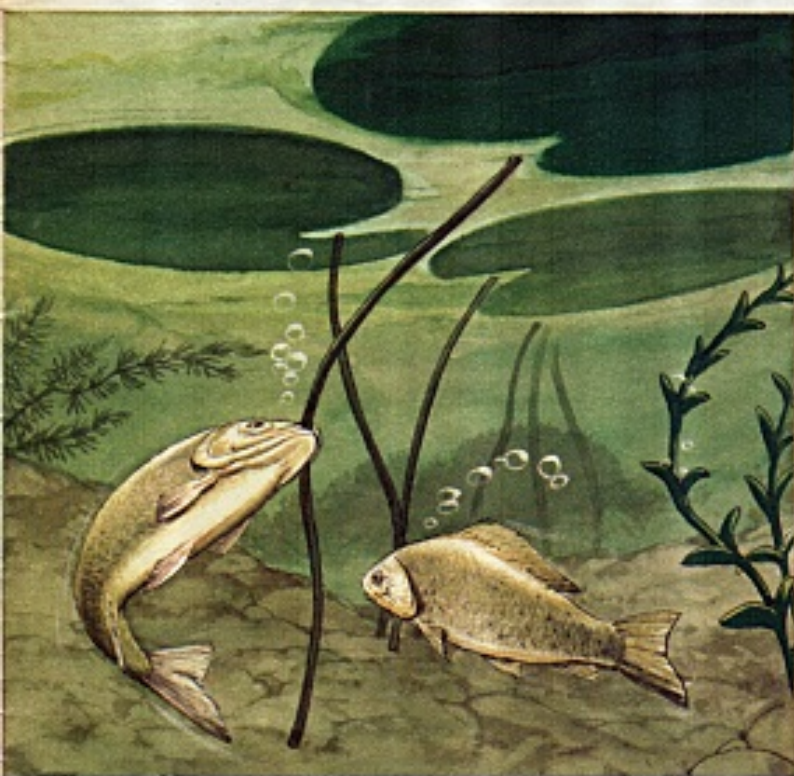




5. "She may try to run away," said the old toad. "Let us take her out to the middle of the stream and put her on a water-lily leaf, where she cannot escape." So they swam out to a water-lily leaf carrying Thumbelina and then the old toad swam back to prepare a room in the mud, for her son and Thumbelina.



6. When Thumbelina woke up, she was horrified to find herself out in the middle of the stream and cried bitterly when she saw that she was a prisoner. Soon, the toad and her son came to fetch the walnut-shell bed and take it to the new home. "This is my son," said the toad. "He is to be your husband."



7. Thumbelina wept even more when she heard this, for she did not want to marry the ugly toad and live in the mud one bit. The fish had all heard the old toad talking and they popped their heads out to see Thumbelina. They thought it was such a shame, that they swam down and bit through the stalk of the leaf.



8. The water-lily leaf began to float away down the stream, carrying Thumbelina away from the ugly toads. Thumbelina clapped her hands for joy, for the sunlight was gleaming on the water and around her danced a beautiful butterfly. She took off her sash and tied it to the butterfly, so that she went even faster.

More of this story next week.



# All Sorts of Ducks

There are many kinds of ducks, and you can see them everywhere — in farmyards, parks and river mud-flats. They are web-footed birds, happy to float and paddle on water, or waddle on the ground, or fly in the sky. These Allsorts pages show you some of them. When you see a pair of ducks, the one with the bright-coloured plumage is usually the male bird.



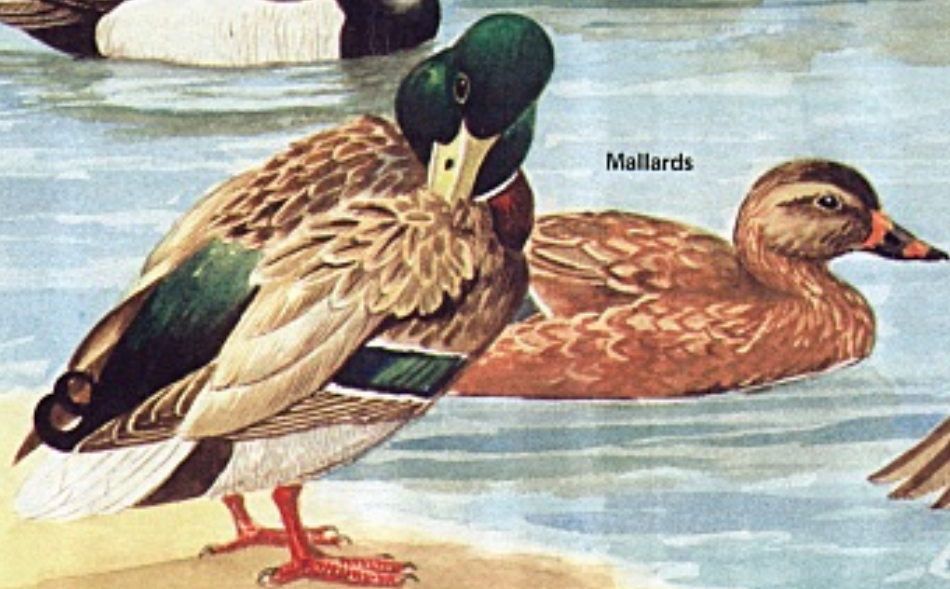
Shelducks



Tufted Ducks



Eider Ducks



Mallards



Teal

EIDER DUCK

SHELDUCK

MALLARD

TUFTED DUCK

TEAL







Shoveller Ducks



Merganser



Pintails



Merganser

Goosanders



Widgeons

WIDGEON

PINTAIL

SHOVELLER

MERGANSER

GOOSANDER







# BREER RABBIT

**N**OW everyone knows that Brer Rabbit was a mighty tricky animal and all the other animals who lived around knew it too. In fact they got very tired of Brer Rabbit's tricks and they would have been very pleased to pay him back, if only they could have thought of a way of doing it.

Perhaps Brer Rabbit got wind of this and heard that all the other animals were putting their heads together to think of a way of taking him down a peg or two, for he lay mighty low for a time. He didn't play any tricks, and he didn't tease any of the other animals, or make fun of them and life was so quiet and peaceful, the other animals hardly knew what was happening.

"Perhaps Brer Rabbit is learning some sense at last," growled Brer Bear, when he met Brer Fox one day.

"I expect he grew frightened when he

heard I was out to catch him and pay him back for his tricks," replied Brer Fox.

"That's right," Brer Bear agreed.

Now had they but known it, Brer Rabbit was growing tired of his quiet life and at that very moment, he was sitting in his house, planning what tricks to play on the other animals next and he had thought of a fine idea. However, he needed to do some preparation first, so he was kept very busy and while he was busy, he was quiet. Nobody saw him and nobody heard him.

He went all through Mrs. Rabbit's rag-bag and he found some large pieces of dark cloth and he got to work, cutting and stitching, until at last he had made himself a fine suit and a pointed hat with a tassel on the end.

Then he cut out some stars and he got all the little rabbits to help him sew those stars all over his suit. When it was finished, he tried the new suit on and it looked mighty

fine. There were plenty of "Oh's" and "Ah's" of admiration from the little rabbits and Brer Rabbit was pleased, for he liked to be admired.

Now food was getting a bit low in Brer Rabbit's house and that naughty rabbit thought how nice it would be to have a fine feast, with all the things he liked best. He smacked his lips as he thought about it, and he decided to see if he could trick the other animals into providing it for him.

Brer Rabbit dressed in his fine new suit and hat and he found a small stick, which made a fine magic wand and off he went, lickety-split, down the road, looking for all the world like a magician. Of course, that was just what Brer Bear, Brer Fox and Brer Wolf thought he was, when they saw him coming towards them. Then they saw it was Brer Rabbit in those fancy clothes and they just stared and stared.



At last, Brer Bear said, "What are those clothes for, Brer Rabbit?"

"Oh, can't you see, Brer Bear?" asked Brer Rabbit. "I'm a magician now and a mighty clever one. You haven't seen me for a long time, because I've been away, learning magic from the chief magician himself, I have. And now I'm very good, I can tell you."

"Well, if you're as good as you claim, let's see you do some really fine magic, Brer Rabbit," said Brer Fox.

Brer Rabbit looked at Brer Fox, sideways, in a crafty kind of way. "Oh, you don't know what you're asking, Brer Fox," he said. "Are you really sure you want me to?"

Brer Fox scratched his head. "Well, now, if you're as good as you claim, it will be no problem, will it, Brer Rabbit?" he said.

"Oh, I'm good, Brer Fox, I'm good," smirked Brer Rabbit. "Now I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll make the sun disappear, that's what I'll do."

"Make the sun disappear?" asked Brer Fox, in a disbelieving kind of way. "Why how can you do that, Brer Rabbit? There's the sun, high up in the sky. Why, Brer Bear, Brer Wolf and I can see it plainly."

"Well, I tell you, I'll make it disappear," replied Brer Rabbit. "But if I do, I warn you, it will be difficult to make it come back again. And I can only do it if you promise to provide a great feast for me, for it's hard work, I can tell you."

Brer Fox and Brer Bear looked at each other craftily. "All right, Brer Rabbit," said Brer Fox. "You make the sun disappear and we promise to provide you with a fine feast — as long as you make it come back again, of course. Ho, ho, ho!" And he roared with laughter and Brer Bear and Brer Wolf laughed too.

Now Brer Rabbit, who had checked the calendar carefully, before he left home, took the other animals to the big meadow. There, he stood on a tree-stump, waved his wand at the sun and said some mighty important-sounding magic words. The others all looked on, laughing loudly, for the sun seemed just as bright as it had always been.

Will Brer Rabbit's magic work? You will find out in *Once Upon A Time* next week.

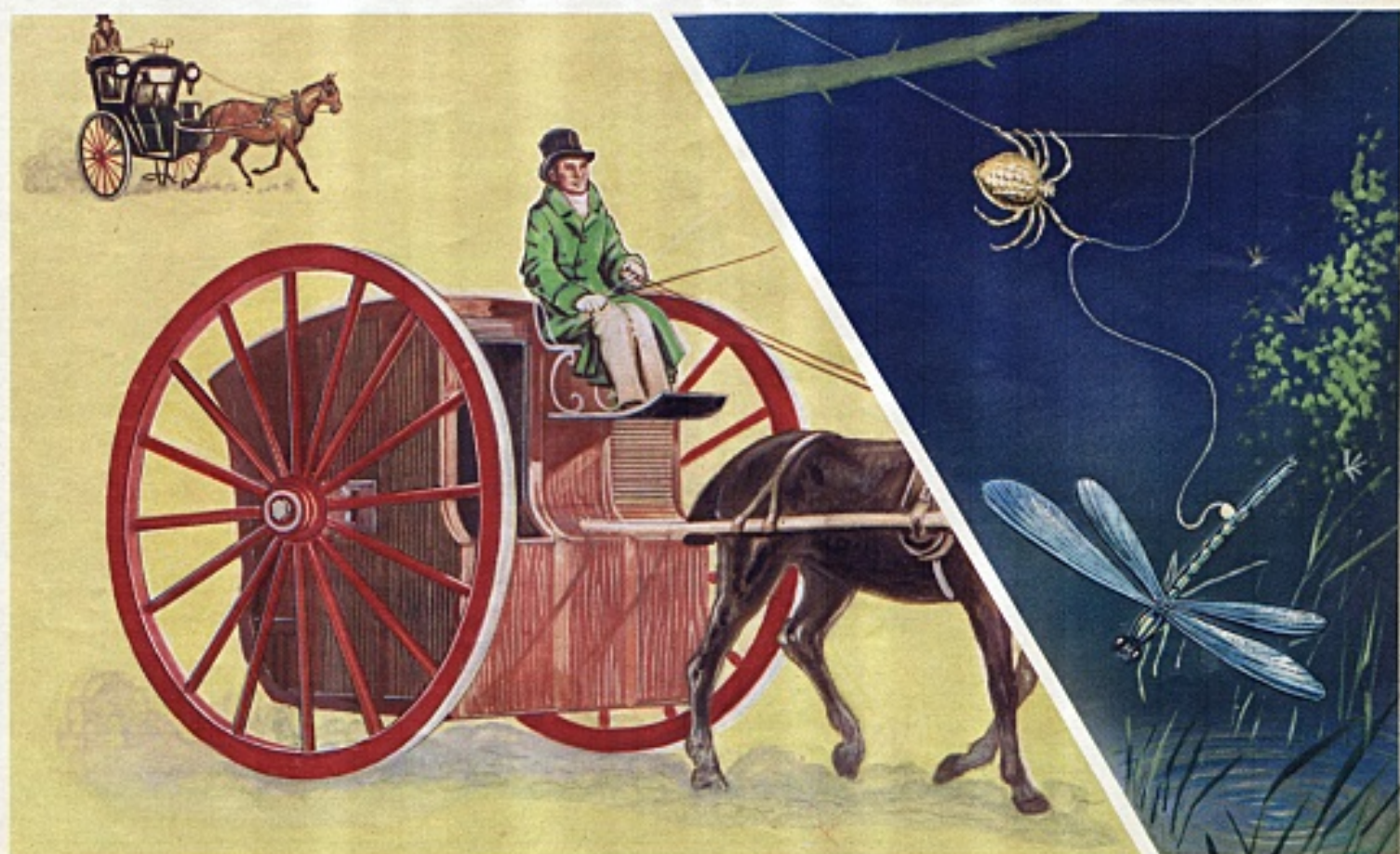




# Well, Fancy That!



Can these men really plant a tree at the North Pole? No, for the North Pole is in the Arctic Ocean, unlike the South Pole, which is on land. The North Pole is covered with thick ice and snow, so explorers have travelled over it and submarines have travelled under the ice. The big, box-like cab with two huge wheels, below, was invented by Joseph Hansom. It was later improved and became like the cab in the small picture. Hansom cabs like these were used as taxis until the coming of the motor car. The Bolas spider, right, spins a line and puts a sticky blob on the end. Then it uses it as a lasso, throwing it at passing insects so that it sticks to them and traps them.





# LEMONS



The citrus trees, on which lemons grow, need plenty of sunshine so they are found in places like California and Rhodesia, where the climate is warm. Many lemons are picked before they are properly ripe and sent to countries like Britain, where they cannot be grown. Although lemons are very good for us, they are not very nice to eat, because they taste sour, so the juice is usually squeezed out, diluted with water and sweetened with sugar and made into a very refreshing drink.



This is a Memory Test. When you have read the story, turn to page 19 and see if you can answer questions about it. You will soon see how good a memory you have.

# The Canterbury Tales

**T**WENTY-NINE people were gathered in the Tabard Inn in Southwark. They were all going on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas Becket at Canterbury. The landlord of the inn was going with them as their guide.

In England, in the 14th century, going on a pilgrimage was rather like going on a holiday. Everyone tried to go on a pilgrimage at least once.

The landlord was determined that it would be a jolly holiday for the pilgrims in his group, so he suggested that for entertainment, each of them should tell two stories on the way back. Then the best story-teller would be treated to a good dinner by all the others when they returned to the inn.

There were all kinds of different people among the landlord's group of pilgrims. There was a brave knight and his squire, an honest yeoman, a dainty prioress and a friar, a poor parson and a poor scholar, a so-called doctor, a lawyer, a miller and several others, and there was also a fat, jolly man with a merry face and a sharp eye.

His name was Geoffrey Chaucer. He listened to the stories the other travellers told and more than that, he watched them keenly and chuckled over their faults and failings. When he was home again, he wrote a book about his companions and the tales they told.

This now-famous book is called *The Canterbury Tales*. It was written over 500 years ago, but it is still read and enjoyed today and Geoffrey Chaucer is remembered as one of the greatest English poets and writers.

#### ARE YOU MISSING SOME COPIES OF "ONCE UPON A TIME"?

If you are, and would like the back numbers to complete your collection, the address to write to is: City Magazines, Aldwych House, 81, Aldwych, London, W.C.1. The cost is 1/8d. each, including postage.









# Wind for the Windmill



1. There was once a miller, a good, honest man, who owned a fine mill. One day, the king happened to be driving past and when he saw the mill, he stopped his carriage, got out and spoke to the miller. "Tomorrow I am giving a big party. I shall need hundreds of loaves of bread, so send me two hundred bags of fine flour," he said. The miller and his son, Jan, were delighted.



2. The king rode away and Jan and his father went to grind the corn but to their horror, when they looked at the mill, they saw that there was no wind to drive the sails. Unless the sails turned round and round, they could not grind the corn for the king. On the very day they needed it most, there was not even a breath of wind. "Oh, what shall we do?" the miller sighed.



3. Little Jan and the big goose, Gander, were great friends, so Jan climbed on to Gander's back. "I must find out why the wind is not blowing on the mill, today," he said. "Please take me to the Weather Man. Perhaps he can tell us." The white goose flew high into the air, carrying little Jan on his back and they travelled for many hours.



4. High on a rocky mountain they found the Weather Man and Jan told him of their plight. He opened a large book. "Now let me see," he said. "The South Wind has joined the West Wind and they are making rain, to make the farmers' crops grow over there." In the distance, Jan could see a great rain cloud, over fields of corn.





5. "The North Wind and the East Wind are helping to blow the fishing boats back from the Northern seas," the Weather Man went on. "They are all too busy to come and blow on your windmill today, I'm afraid." Jan could see the fishing boats, far out at sea, being blown back to land. He turned away in dismay. They left the old Weather Man and Gander flew back towards the mill.



6. "There is no hope for father now," sighed Jan, speaking aloud to himself. "We have no wind to drive the sails, so we will not be able to grind the king's corn and he will be very angry when we do not deliver his bags of flour, because he will have no loaves of bread for his party. Poor father. I wish I could think of something to do to help him." And Jan gave a deep sigh.



7. Now clever Gander had heard all this and he had an idea. On the way back, he called to all his friends as he passed them and told them all to come to the mill. All the birds rallied to his call and soon great numbers of them, geese, swans, storks, eagles and many more, were gathering around the mill.



8. As the birds wheeled and circled around the mill, the beating of their wings created a wind strong enough to blow the sails of the windmill round and round. Jan rushed to fetch his father. "Look, father," he cried. "With the help of the birds, we can grind the flour for the king after all." And they did.





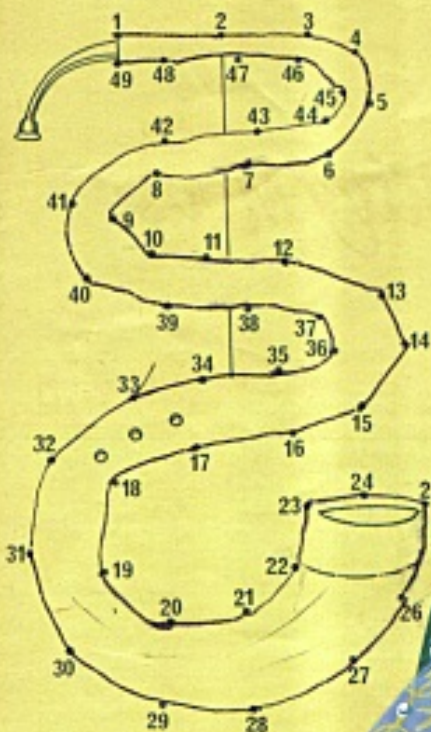
## Beautiful Paintings

Anselm Feuerbach was the artist who painted this lovely picture and he called it "Boy and girl playing and singing." If you look carefully you will see that the girl and boy have garlands of flowers and leaves on their heads. We do not know the song the girl is singing to the music of the boy's mandoline, but it would be a sweet sound, like the tinkling of the small waterfall in the background. You can cut out this picture and add it to your collection of Once Upon A Time Beautiful Paintings.



# Queen Elizabeth the First

The daughter of King Henry the Eighth and Anne Boleyn, Queen Elizabeth came to the throne in 1558. She was a good and well-loved queen and ruled for 45 years. Queen Elizabeth was 70 years old when she died. This lovely picture of her shows her in a beautifully-decorated dress.



By joining the dots from 1 to 49, you will draw a serpent, a musical instrument of those times.



Join the dots from 1 to 27 to complete a picture of an Elizabethan desk.







## The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

Stephanie goes riding.

It was such a lovely, sunny day that Stephanie, the smart, pretty town mouse and her boy-friend Nigel, had gone out for a ride in Nigel's car.

The town was very hot and stuffy, so they made for the country, where it was nice and cool. "I like the country," said Nigel. "I can't think why we bother to live in a town, where it's always stuffy and dirty. I'm sure your cousin Winifred has a much nicer life, living in the country all the time."

"Well, if you want to turn into a country bumpkin, like my cousin Winifred, you can," said Stephanie, rather nastily. "Why, she's so dull. There's nothing to do and nowhere to go. I like my smart friends and the shows and theatres in the town."

Just then, Nigel spotted a sign that said, Sunnyside Riding School - Ten shillings an hour.

"Oh, I don't know, there are plenty of things to do in the country," said Nigel. "Horse riding, for instance. Look at that. Ten shillings for an hour on a horse. Let's try it."

"In my lovely dress, you expect me to go sitting on some dirty old horse?" squeaked Stephanie in horror.

Just then, a very smart-looking mouse rode out of the stables, on a beautiful brown horse, which had been groomed until its coat gleamed. The mouse wore the most beautiful riding clothes, and a smart black riding hat on her head.

"I'll tell you what," said Nigel. "I saw a shop back there which sold riding clothes. If I take you there and buy you a proper riding outfit, will you try horse-riding?"

Stephanie was secretly pleased with the idea, so Nigel took her back to the shop and they spent a long time choosing the very nicest riding clothes they could find.

At last, Stephanie was satisfied and back they went to the riding school.

"We want two horses, please, for an hour," said Nigel.

"The best-looking horses you've got," added Stephanie, who thought this was

most important.

The groom brought out two sleek-looking horses and helped Stephanie get on one of them. Once in the saddle, Stephanie wasn't sure she liked it at all. She was so high up and the ground was such a long way away. Still, she decided to give it a try, especially when she heard one of the stable girls murmur, "Ooh, doesn't she look smart?"

The horses started to walk out of the gate and hadn't gone very far, when Stephanie's horse saw some nice leaves on the top of the hedge and stopped to eat them. "Gee up," said Stephanie crossly, but all the horse said was Neigh-h-h-h.

"Gee up," said Stephanie again and she touched the horse with her riding whip. This annoyed the horse and he began to trot along the road. "Ooh, I don't like this one bit," said Stephanie, who hadn't meant to make the horse go as fast as that.

Just at that moment a green car came roaring along the road, just behind them. As it reached Stephanie it gave a loud Toot-toot on its horn. The horse laid back its ears, gave a frightened snort and jumped a low hedge. That was too much for Stephanie. She couldn't hold on a minute longer and off she fell. Luckily, she landed on a nice, soft pile of leaves.

Just then, Stephanie heard the clip, clip, clip, of horses' hoofs and thinking it was Nigel, coming to rescue her, she shut her eyes and tried to look very pained. The horses stopped and she heard a strange voice say, "Why, it's a lady, fallen from her horse. I hope she isn't badly injured."

Stephanie opened her eyes. There above her was a very distinguished-looking mouse, with grey hair, sitting in a smart carriage drawn by two horses.

"Oh, no, I'm all right, I think. It's just shock," she said, sitting up. "My horse bolted."

"It must have been that noisy green car," said the elderly mouse. "Madam mouse, let me give you a hand into my carriage. I am Sir Marcus Mouse and I have a large

house near here. There you can rest for a little."

Stephanie climbed into the carriage. She felt very pleased with herself, especially when, a moment or two later, she saw Nigel, coming to look for her. "You carry on with your riding, Nigel," she said grandly. "I would hate to spoil it for you. I am going to Sir Marcus's house to rest. I will collect my clothes and change there."

"And then I will take you for a ride in my carriage afterwards," said Sir Marcus. "It will make you feel much better."

When Stephanie had changed into her fine town clothes again and was riding along in Sir Marcus's horse-drawn carriage, she felt much happier. She was quite certain now that the proper place for horses was pulling a carriage. All the country-folk turned to look at them, for of course, they knew Sir Marcus, and she heard one or two of them remark, "I wonder who that smart young mouse is, with Sir Marcus?" It almost made the fall from the horse worth it.

When they got back to Sir Marcus's big house, Nigel was waiting for them, so they all had tea, served on a silver trolley.

Stephanie sank back into the thick velvet cushions of Sir Marcus's sofa and gazed dreamily about her. Tea was being served in the library and the young town mouse looked at the portraits of her host's family which were hanging on the walls and thought that they looked very posh.

"Fancy sitting in the same room as a titled person," thought Stephanie. "Mrs. Topdrawer will be terribly envious when I tell her all about my adventures in the country."

Then it was time to leave and Stephanie could hardly wait to get home and tell all her friends about her charming new friend, Sir Marcus Mouse and the delightful afternoon she had spent at his big house in the country.

Another story of the Town Mouse and Country Mouse next week.









# King Arthur

## and the Knights of the Round Table

**I**t was a sad day for England, for Uther Pendragon — the King of all England — was dying.

Now, as far as the people of England knew, their dying King had no heir. But, in fact, King Uther had a little two-year-old son named Arthur.

Just before King Uther died he told all of the nobles and knights who were with him, that his rightful heir was his son Arthur.

No sooner had the King passed away than many of the nobles tried to find out where young King Arthur was living. But they all failed.

That secret was kept well by the chief adviser to the old King...a man named Merlin.

Merlin was very old, but he had great wisdom. He was a wizard. He could work magic spells, and sometimes he could even see into the future.

It was wise old Merlin who had advised King Uther not to let it be known that he had a baby son.

So, the baby prince had been left in the care of a good and faithful knight whose wife brought Arthur up as their own son.

It was a good thing nobody else knew the secret of young Arthur, for many of the lords of the land quarrelled among themselves, saying that they should be crowned King of England.

Merlin knew that such men would not have let a baby prince stand in their way!

Well, as the years passed, England became a land where law and order were things of the past.

By the time Arthur was sixteen, Merlin knew that if England was to be saved, the country must have a king.

Merlin had already shared young Arthur's secret with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Merlin now went to the great holy man and told him: "Arthur must come to the throne!"

"I fear it will not be easy to convince the people of our land that Arthur is the rightful heir to the throne," said the archbishop. "Many will demand proof that this lad is the son of Uther Pendragon."

Merlin agreed, but he had high hopes that all would be well. So, heralds were sent forth over the length and breadth of the land to proclaim that at the feast of Christmas, all of the barons, lords and knights should gather in the great church in London.

There, with the Archbishop, they would pray, hoping that their prayers would be answered and that a miracle would be worked which would prove who should be the rightful king of the land.

On Christmas Day, the Archbishop held a



service in the great church in London. Never before had there been such a vast throng of people both in and outside the church.

Suddenly a startled cry broke from those who stood in the churchyard.

The people were startled to see a huge stone which had not been seen in the churchyard before that moment!

And, held in the stone by its point, was a gleaming sword! Words were written round the sword in letters of gold.

The words said:

*Whoso pulleth this sword out of this stone is rightwise born King of England.*

The message brought tears of joy to the eyes of old Merlin. But many of the lords and noblemen were angry; and all those who wished to be king tried one after the other to pull the sword out of the stone.

Everyone failed.

In the following days, more and more noblemen came to London, hoping to be able to pull the sword out of the stone ... but none of them could do it.

Then old Merlin willed it that one day an honourable knight rode to where the sword was fixed in the big stone. With this knight came a young man, clad in a simple brown tunic.

No one but Merlin knew that the knight was the one into whose care Merlin had entrusted the baby prince all those long years before, and that the young man was Arthur, true son of King Uther Pendragon!

The richly-clad nobles treated him with looks of disdain. What was such a humble fellow as he doing among them?

Then the Archbishop spoke to the young man.

"Strange tales of thee have come to me," he said. "Whether they be true or false, God shall decide. Take ye a hold upon this sword ... and draw it from the stone if ye can!"

How the rival nobles scoffed when they heard these words. They had failed. What chance had this youth of succeeding?

As Arthur stepped up to the stone they crowded round him. Several laughed aloud as they watched him reach out with both hands and grasp the haft of the sword.

Then, with no effort at all, Arthur pulled it out of the stone!

People gasped in surprise. But many of the nobles were angry.

"What trickery is this?" cried one, turning upon the Archbishop. "No beggar's brat is going to be foisted upon us as our king!"

"Speak not of trickery," replied the Archbishop, sternly. "You know what the words about the sword say. This youth has drawn that sword. He is rightful King of England!"

There were some lords and nobles who still protested angrily. But the wisdom of old Merlin prevailed in the end.

The ordinary people quickly took to young Arthur. He would be an honest king who would uphold their rights against the wicked men.

"Arthur shall be our King!" they shouted. "Hail King Arthur, long to reign over us!"

So, by the will of the people, King Arthur was crowned and came to the throne of England.

More of this exciting story of King Arthur in *Once Upon A Time* next week.

#### YOUR EDITOR'S LETTER

Dear Boys and Girls,

I do hope that you are enjoying all the stories and the interesting features in *Once Upon A Time*. Have you seen the new picture story on pages 2 and 3? It is about a little girl who is no larger than a woman's thumb. Brer Rabbit is up to his tricks again in a new adventure, and you can also read about your old friends The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse.

From your friend,  
The Editor.

Here are some questions about the story on page 10. How many can you answer before you turn back to check your memory?

1. Where were the people who gathered at the Tabard Inn going?
2. Whose shrine did they want to visit?
3. In which town was the shrine?
4. What did the landlord suggest they should do for entertainment on the journey?
5. Who wrote down the stories they told when he returned home?
6. What is the name of his book?
7. How long ago was it written?







# The WISE OLD OWL

## Knows all the answers

Your friend the Wise Old Owl is here again with some answers to puzzling questions.



### 1. Why do we have Lightships?

"Lightships are placed to mark danger points in the sea, usually where there are sandbanks over which a ship could not pass in safety. The lightships never move, for they are firmly anchored to the sea-bed. They show a strong light and in fog sound off a loud horn to warn ships away."



### 2. What are scavengers?

"The name scavenger is given to certain animals which feed on other dead animals, decaying plants and rubbish of all kinds. Jackals are typical scavengers and those in the picture are being watched by hungry vultures, who would like to join in. Certain beetles and other insects are also scavengers."



### 3. What is a barbecue?

"You may be surprised to know that the word barbecue was at first the name given to a bed with a wooden framework on which people slept. Nowadays we think of a barbecue as a framework of iron on which chickens and joints of meat are roasted, generally out in the open as a picnic treat."



### 4. What is the difference between a mosquito and a gnat?

"A mosquito and a gnat look alike when flying, but a mosquito often rests with its body pointing down at an angle, as shown. It is the female mosquito which bites and irritates us."



### 5. Why do we give the name Bruin to a bear?

"This has a very simple explanation. The Dutch word for brown is bruin, and as most bears are brownish in colour, the name of bruin was given to them by somebody, and it has been so since."